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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 8 December 1992, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. GANEV (Bulgaria)

later: Mr. PHOOFOLO (Lesotho)
(Vice-President)

- Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections [16] (continued)

  (c) Election of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme: Note by the Secretary-General

- The situation in Central America: Procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace and progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development [36]

  (a) Report of the Secretary-General

  (b) Draft resolution

/...

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- Tentative programme of work

- The situation in Central America: procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace and progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development [36] (continued)

  (a) Report of the Secretary-General

  (b) Draft resolution

- Commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations in 1995 [48]

  (a) Report of the Preparatory Committee for the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations

  (b) Draft decision

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 16 (continued)

ELECTIONS TO FILL VACANCIES IN SUBSIDIARY ORGANS AND OTHER ELECTIONS

(c) ELECTION OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME: NOTE BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/47/752)

The PRESIDENT: In his note (A/47/752) the Secretary-General informs the Assembly that he wishes to nominate Ms. Elizabeth Dowdeswell to be Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme for a four-year term beginning on 1 January 1993.

May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to elect Ms. Dowdeswell as Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme for a four-year term beginning on 1 January 1993, as recommended by the Secretary-General?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: We have thus concluded our consideration of agenda item 16 (c).

AGENDA ITEM 36

THE SITUATION IN CENTRAL AMERICA: PROCEDURES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FIRM AND LASTING PEACE AND PROGRESS IN FASHIONING A REGION OF PEACE, FREEDOM, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT

(a) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/47/739)

(b) DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/47/L.34)

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Nicaragua, who will introduce draft resolution A/47/L.34 in the course of his statement.

Mr. MAYORGA CORTES (Nicaragua) (interpretation from Spanish): Let me begin by congratulating you, Sir, on the manner in which you have been guiding the work of the General Assembly, which but confirms your skill, your experience and your personal qualities and the qualities of your country, all of which led to your election.

It is a special pleasure for Nicaragua to be addressing the Assembly today, on behalf of the Central American countries, on the item, "The situation in Central America: Procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace and progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development". This is the first time in 10 years that the situation in Central America is not being considered under the item entitled "The situation in Central America: threats to international peace and security and peace initiatives".

That change in our approach to the question of Central America is not casual nor is it without meaning. It comes from the achievements we Central Americans have ourselves been making gradually but firmly since 1987, when the Esquipulas I agreement was signed in Guatemala. At that time, Central American Presidents made a pledge to struggle for peace and to eradicate war,

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to make dialogue prevail over violence and reason over rancour, to promote genuine pluralistic and participatory democratic processes and to promote justice and respect for human rights. They did this in the conviction that the peaceful settlement of conflicts, respect for human rights and the promotion of freedom and democracy are basic components of the structures of peace.

To undertake this delicate mission and achieve those objectives, the Central American Presidents asked for the support and assistance of the international community. In that spirit they called on the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary-General of the Organization of American States (OAS) to provide the broadest possible support for efforts to achieve peace.

The response was rapid. The active participation of the United Nations took form in November 1989, when the Security Council adopted its resolution 644 (1989), establishing the United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA). That operation, whose original mandate was to verify compliance with the commitment to cease support for irregular forces and not to permit the use of our territories for attacks on other States, was unique in the annals of peace-keeping, and was the first United Nations operation of this kind relating to Central America. Its mandate was later broadened to enable it to receive and destroy matériel and military equipment of the Nicaraguan resistance and to supervise the cease-fire and the separation of forces agreed upon by both parties to the conflict.

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The delicate mission being carried out by the United Nations in Central America illustrates the diversity that can mark cooperation among United Nations bodies when they are given unusual missions with a view to safeguarding peace. That was the case when in March 1989, at the request of the Government of Nicaragua, the United Nations Observer Mission to verify the electoral process in Nicaragua was established. It played a critical role in the peaceful holding of elections in our country. That was the first time the United Nations had observed an election in a sovereign State.

Convinced that a peaceful settlemet in El Salvador would contribute to the success of the peace process in Central America, the Security Council adopted its resolution 693 (1991) of 20 May 1991, by which it established the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL). That was to be the first peace-keeping mission to include monitoring of human-rights matters. The establishment of ONUSAL has been of special importance in ending the conflict in El Salvador, since its mandate includes verification of the agreement signed at Mexico City in January 1992 by the Government of El Salvador and the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN).

We are pleased also that the Security Council adopted its resolution 784 (1992) of 30 October 1992, by which it extended the mandate of ONUSAL, and resolution 791 (1992) of 30 November 1992, by which it extended the role of ONUSAL to 31 May 1993. We also thank the Secretary-General for his report of 23 November 1992 on the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador.

The best tribute we can pay to the importance of what took place in Chapultepec and, earlier, in New York would be to repeat the words of the

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President of El Salvador, His Excellency Mr. Alfredo Cristiani Burkard, who addressed the General Assembly on 23 September 1992, and said that

> "peace in El Salvador is not just a matter of restoring normal conditions - those that prevailed before the conflict - but of establshing peace of a new kind, unprecedented in our country. Besides being a civilized way of ending armed confrontation, peace is a complex series of commitments aimed at consolidating democracy in El Salvador. It is a means of providing more opportunities for pluralist participation, a way to create socio-political conditions for stability based on democratic legality among all existing sectors and groups of society.
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> "...
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> "... The peace agreement is sound and convincing to the Salvadorian people and to the entire world as well, because it empowers and expands democracy." (A/47/PV.8, pp. 12, 13)

We hope those agreements will be successful, and we are pleased that, recently, progress has been made on the main questions that are still pending. That will make it possible, on 15 December, to mark the end of the war, an all-important event in the gradual but firm process of bringing peace and reconciliation to El Salvador and the rest of the Central American family.

In a different context, I want to note that the Special Plan of Economic Cooperation for Central America, which was conceived as a support mechanism for the subregional peace agreements, has mobilized large resources for the subregion as part of its programmes for emergencies, immediate action, economic reactivation and social development.

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Particular attention has been given to the Special Plan for strengthening the institutional capacity of the mechanisms and institutions of Central American integration.

Central America wishes to affirm that the Secretary-General's good-offices initiatives and the implementation of the Special Plan of Economic Cooperation for Central America represent a substantive contribution by the United Nations and the international community to the preservation of peace, freedom, democracy and development in our region. In Central America the United Nations has shown its potential and demonstrated its imagination, and it has given the image of a revitalized and renewed organization.

The establishment of democratic régimes in our countries is not in itself a guarantee that we shall resolve the large political, economic and social problems facing us. We are well aware that if our democracies are to grow and flourish the major efforts must come from us Central Americans. None the less, as young and inexperienced democracies our countries also need the understanding and sustained support of the international community, since, given the existing circumstances in the world today, the construction and consolidation of democracy impose a high political and social cost on our countries.

In this connection it is approppriate to recall the following timely comments of the President of Nicaragua, Her Excellency Mrs. Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, in her address to the General Assembly on 21 September this year:

> "We in Nicaragua are concerned at how fragile democracy is in the developing countries. ... We have the impression that the international community has not yet fully realized what is at stake in some of these

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countries. Freedom is still extremely fragile there, and economic and social democracy is a distant dream. ...

"... the new democracies lack democratic institutions and traditions; the economic elements that promote change are scarce; violence has not yet fully died out and intolerance and hatred still reign. In the nascent democracies, the new political systems must be bolstered in the midst of high levels of extreme poverty, the legacy of the foreign debt burden, the impact of stringent economic adjustments, the benefits of which will be felt only over the long term. These are serious constraints on efforts to get the economy off the ground and to promote growth, and extra efforts must be made on top of what is normal for developing countries." (A/47/PV.4, pp. 54-55)

At present the world's attention is focused on a number of urgent problems. There are serious threats to international peace and security, with implications that require immediate and effective attention. Our countries are concerned above all at the extraordinary proliferation of micronationalisms and microregionalisms, combined with the revere and intolerant manifestations of ethnic, racial and religious conflicts. For that reason we have lent support at the appropriate time to the actions taken by the United Nations to combat the most recent expressions of such reprehensible attitudes. None the less, we also deem it of special importance that the United Nations and the international community not forget or defer their commitment to Central America, as reflected in various resolutions adopted here.

In this connection we must recognize - frankly, without bitterness, but with a high degree of concern - that outside cooperation was more timely and

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generous when we were experiencing the intense conflicts of the cold war than it is today when peace and democracy are being strengthened and consolidated and when human rights and development are being promoted in the aftermath of bipolarity. For that reason we wish to give special thanks to all those Member States, both developed and developing, that have understood the problems of Central America and that, despite their own restrictions or limitations, have continued to support the strengthening of peace and democracy in each of our countries, with absolute respect for our circumstances and without seeking concessions that impinge upon our dignity and sovereignty.

Here we should like to recall the following passage from the statement made in the General Assembly on 18 September this year by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica, His Excellency Mr. Bern Niehaus Quesada:

> "... the experience of Central America also shows the international community that it is very difficult to consolidate advances achieved in matters relating to peace and democracy if the underlying reality of underdevelopment and poverty continues to exist. The democratic and peaceful Central America of today has seen the world lose interest in its problems. It has witnessed a decline in the cooperation that existed when it was in turmoil. The Latin American peoples' effort to change their destiny has collided with the increasing indifference of the developed nations. Financial aid is being reduced. Coffee and bananas, our leading export products, are encountering more and more obstacles. We are being urged to diversify our production, but international markets are not opening up to us. Central America is being urged to advance towards democracy without our being given the tools that will lead us to

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development. Political democracy alone, regrettably, is not a panacea for the social problems of our countries." (A/47/PV.15, p. 112)

The ideals that prevail in all our countries - a vision of a more modern world and of our internal circumstances, and concrete action to facilitate our movement away from conflict and towards cooperation, from violence to reconciliation and democracy - are reflected in the statement made this year in the General Assembly by the Guatemalan Minister for Foreign Affairs, His Excellency Mr. Menendez Park. He reminded us that:

"As a region, ... we have been able to take our historic destiny in hand and, by an approach that we ourselves designed, often in the face of the scepticism of people who thought us unable to solve our problems other than on the basis of external formulas, have managed to overcome the spiral of violence and, at the same time, initiate a process of democratization and pacification, which is now bearing fruit and is transforming our nations with the promise of a better future for our peoples." (A/47/PV.17, pp. 102 and 103-105)

And Foreign Minister Menendez Park continued:

"As Central Americans, we Guatemalans are aware that the challenge of our future is entirely in our own hands. The process of democratization, begun some years ago, is the start of a much broader process - one aimed at transforming our social, economic and cultural structures and at securing the well-being of all Guatemalans." (A/47/PV.17, pp. 103-105)

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The attempts of the countries of our region to make Central America a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development included during the past year substantive efforts in the framework of the work of the Security Commission established under the Equipulas II agreements. On 14 August this year at the Commission's meeting in Managua, Nicaragua, a preliminary mechanism was developed for assistance, cooperation and coordination to eliminate the illegal arms traffic in Central America. We did this in fulfilment of the mandate contained in the Managua Agenda, which was adopted at the last meeting of Central American Presidents, held in our country last June. It was also agreed that this mechanism should be set in motion at the subregional level on 1 September 1992, and the region's Security Commission was urged to continue its work under the terms established in the Managua Agenda.

Furthermore, the Executive Commission established under the Esquipulas Agreements, composed of Foreign Ministers, highlighted in August 1992 the importance of preparatory work for the adoption of an agreement for mutual judicial assistance concerning a mechanism for the elimination of the illegal arms traffic and expressed its full support for initiatives on the removal of mines from countries of the area. It is estimated that in Nicaragua there are approximately 130,000 mines, most of them in the border areas, and our country has requested international support for their removal in the context of the Partnership for Democracy and Development in Central America, a mechanism for cooperation in the region which we consider to be vital to the strengthening of democracy and promotion of development in our subregion.

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We also want to draw attention to the holding on 18 November 1992 in Managua of the seventeenth meeting of the Executive Commission of the Esquipulas Agreements, composed of Foreign Ministers of our countries. The most relevant political aspects of the issues to be considered at the forthcoming meeting of Presidents, to be held in Panama, were discussed at that meeting.

The adverse conditions in our countries have prompted us to seek increased coordination of our development policies and practices. The general framework for this has been the gradual development of a shared view of the subregion's future, combining the principles of participative democracy and respect for human rights with the need to promote economic growth and a greater investment in human development and in the social sectors. These latter two concerns were the subject of important decisions by the Central American Presidents at their meeting in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, in December last year, when a subregional programme with concrete goals and targets for the year 2000 was adopted.

The commitment of our countries to the process of subregional integration and the fundamental aspects of human and social development were summarized in the statement by the Foreign Minister of Honduras, Mr. Mario Carías Zapata, at this session, when he said:

> "With peace in El Salvador, Central America, under the sign of democracy, is returning to the path of integration and development. Our countries are aware of the countless challenges posed by the insufficiency of our productive infrastructure, poverty and inequalities. But we also know that with dedication and vision, and especially with unity, we shall be able to overcome them.

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"That is why the Tegucigalpa Protocol (A/46/829, annex III) of 13 December 1991 has entered into force, establishing a system for Central American integration which, working in the summit meetings of Presidents of the Central American isthmus, will impart force and impetus to a broad movement towards integration." (A/47/PV.26, pp. 64-65)

The Foreign Minister of Honduras also said:

"If we justly aspire to economic development, and to growing expansion of trade in goods and services originating from all continents, we should likewise aspire to, and indeed make possible, real improvement in the quality of life of the inhabitants of our countries." (ibid., p. 66)

The meeting of Central American Presidents held in Managua, Nicaragua, in June this year was an important step along the path that has made it possible to evaluate and reaffirm the commitments, achievements and expectations of the 11 summit meetings held in the general framework of the Esquipulas process. In the Managua Declaration it is said that this process

"is an expression of sovereignty and regional self-determination of great historic value, which has made it possible for the Central Americans themselves to define their principles and goals, and to take vital decisions on their future, which is a reaffirmation of the identity and autonomy of the peoples of the area, a prerequisite for their integrated development."

It was also recognized that the fundamental value of this unique, harmonious and indivisible process is an awareness that the destiny of Central America depends on its ability to meet in a united way the challenges of peace, freedom, democracy and development.

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Other matters of extreme importance in the Managua Declaration include the basic commitment to preserve democracy; unrestricted respect for all human rights; the need for sustained international cooperation to consolidate peace and strengthen democracy; forceful condemnation of illicit arms trafficking in the subregion; the importance of the new model of regional security; maintenance of the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes as a fundamental norm for the coexistence of the States of the subregion; the importance of access for our commodities on just terms to international markets; and the priority to be accorded to reincorporating into productive life those who have been demobilized and populations uprooted by conflict.

We are grateful for the report of the Secretary-General (A/47/739), which describes what has happened in El Salvador and Guatemala and refers to the work of the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL). None the less, we want to stress that agenda item 36 required a reference to the two parts, A and B, of resolution 46/109 - in other words, on the one hand, a view of the situation in Central America from the standpoint of procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace, and on the other hand, some treatment, even if brief, of progress in establishing a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development.

We regret the limited scope of this report. We would have appreciated it if, in addition to dealing with the conflicts still going on in Guatemala and El Salvador, it had reflected the results of the Presidential summits of December 1991 in Tegucigalpa, and June 1992, in Managua, as well as central aspects of the process of subregional integration and other events of particular importance that have taken place in Central America this year,

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including the end of the dispute between El Salvador and Honduras, with both countries in September accepting the Judgment of the International Court of Justice, as well as Nicaragua's withdrawing its claim against Honduras before the Court, a claim submitted at the end of the 1980s. We would therefore appreciate it if the Secretariat could prepare a revised version of document A/47/739. We also hope that in future reports account will be taken of the entire subregional subject to which resolution 46/109 refers.

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Taking stock of events in Central America in 1992, one may objectively conclude that, politically, the trend has been positive and encouraging. I hasten to point out, however, that we have barely embarked upon the path of consolidating and building peace and that we must avoid any setbacks in the process of peacemaking, reconciliation and democratization that we have undertaken. We must also tackle the fundamental causes of poverty and underdevelopment. Preventive diplomacy has a crucially important role to play in Central America.

The thirteenth meeting of Central American Presidents is scheduled to take place in Panama this week. At the beginning of December a preparatory meeting of the economic cabinets of the subregion was held in Panama at which time the Foreign Minister of Panama, Mr. Julio Linares, referred to a statement by his President, Mr. Guillermo Endara, that Panama would be joining the rest of Central America in a gradual and complementary manner. Minister Linares added:

> "Our integration is consistent with a geographical reality, with the affinities that we have as peoples and as nations; it also reflects our needs and our potential".

The Minister stressed an integrationist vision that goes above and beyond strictly economic aspects.

The forthcoming meeting of Central American Presidents will be focusing on the main guidelines of sub-regional agricultural policy and on key institutional aspects of the system of Central American integration.

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It is an honour for me to introduce for consideration by the General Assembly draft resolution A/47/L.34. The document is intended to support the individual and collective action taken by our countries for reconciliation and for a firm and lasting peace and to promote the shaping of Central America as a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development in accordance with the terms of resolution 46/109.

The draft resolution contains a summary of the main achievements and of matters awaiting solution. It emphasizes the importance of support by the international community for the efforts being made by our countries, especially by the Secretary-General and his representatives and the United Nations system as a whole. Similarly, it stresses the importance of the Special Plan of Economic Cooperation for Central America and of political dialogue and economic cooperation with the European Community, the group of cooperating countries - Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela - and the Partnership for Democracy and Development in Central America. It would have the Assembly decide to include the item on the provisional agenda of its next session and request the Secretary-General to submit a report on the implementation of the provisions of the draft resolution.

We ask that draft resolution A/47/L.34 be adopted by consensus.

TENTATIVE PROGRAMME OF WORK

The PRESIDENT: As we approach the date when the General Assembly recesses for the holidays - Friday, 18 December - I should like to urge representatives who wish to have draft resolutions considered before the recess, to submit them as soon as possible and no later than 16 December.

(The President)

There are still several agenda items under which draft resolutions are to be considered. I should therefore like to submit the following tentative programme of work:

On Wednesday, 9 December, in the afternoon, the Assembly will consider the report of the Second Committee under agenda item 87, "Special economic and disaster relief assistance". Immediately thereafter, the Assembly will take up all reports of the First Committee.

On Friday, 11 December, in the morning, the Assembly will take up agenda item 40, "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council", and agenda item 30, "Question of Palestine".

In the afternoon of Friday, 11 December, the Assembly will consider the reports of the Special Political Committee.

On Monday, 14 December, the Assembly will take up agenda item 33, "Policies of apartheid of the Government of South Africa", and agenda item 34, "United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa". That same day, in the afternoon, the Assembly will consider the reports of the Third Committee.

I would hope that on 15 and 16 December the Assembly will take up agenda items that have draft resolutions pending.

AGENDA ITEM 36 (continued)

THE SITUATION IN CENTRAL AMERICA: PROCEDURES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FIRM AND LASTING PEACE AND PROGRESS IN FASHIONING A REGION OF PEACE, FREEDOM, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT

(a) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/47/739)

(b) DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/47/L.34)

Mr. PRESSLER (United States of America): We are pleased to be a sponsor of the draft resolution before the Assembly recognizing the progress towards peace, democracy and economic development in Central America.

We commend the Secretary-General for his leadership in promoting the regional peace process, particularly in support of fulfilment of the peace accords in El Salvador. We likewise applaud the constructive participation and support of the Governments of Colombia, Mexico, Spain and Venezuela.

We are now nearing completion of the cease-fire phase of the process marking the formal end of the armed confrontation. The parties are close to implementing the major security-related aspects of the peace accords with full demobilization of the Farabundo Martí Liberation Front (FMLN) set for 15 December 1992. We have every expectation that all the precursor steps to be taken by the Government and the military, on the one hand, and the FMLN, on the other, together with those actions that flow from it, will take place as scheduled.

With the successful conclusion of the cease-fire, the peace process enters a new, more promising phase: immediately after demobilization, the FMLN will enter the democratic arena as a political party, formally recognized by the proper Salvadoran authorities. Reforms to strengthen and broaden democracy - from judicial and electoral reform to the fielding of the new national civilian police force - can receive the full attention of the

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parties, interested Governments and the international donor community in general. We pledge our support to this reform effort.

El Salvador's economy and society are in a difficult transition from conflict to reconstruction. El Salvador has pressing needs in both the near- and long-term. Pledges made at last March's World Bank Consultative Group meeting went a long way towards meeting the longer-term requirements. But short-term obligations flowing from the peace accords - to carry out a huge land transfer programme, to build a new national civilian police force and to enact the electoral and judicial reforms - have created acute short-term financial exigencies. We ask that, wherever possible, Governments wishing to assist the reconstruction programme examine the possibility of providing quick-disbursing assistance.

(Mr. Pressler, United States)

The Assembly may be aware that my Government last week released $54 million of assistance that had been withheld from the Government of Nicaragua for several months. We are acting quickly to have the cash transfer portion of that aid - $40 million - disbursed quickly. We fully support the goals of the Chamorro Administration and have acted now to help restore confidence that those goals will be achieved. At the same time, we believe that to attract investment, promote growth and help consolidate democratic institutions, Nicaragua itself must do more to establish the rule of law and civilian control over military and police authorities and to protect human and property rights.

The United States supports the process of national reconciliation under way in Guatemala and urges the parties involved to redouble their efforts to reach a peaceful settlement. We share the Secretary-General's hope for, and dedication to, fostering a political settlement of this long-running civil conflict. We applaud the willingness of both sides to contemplate United Nations involvement in monitoring and verification of an eventual agreement. We urge the parties to do their utmost to conclude a human rights agreement promptly.

With Central America so close to ending all internal conflicts within the region, the stage is set for rapid further progress in other areas: reduction in the size of military budgets and forces, regional integration on the basis of free and open trading regimes and structural reforms that will free up national resources for productive investment. These and other objectives are being addressed in the Esquipulas process by the Central American Presidents. We wish them success at the meeting that begins on 11 December in Panama.

(Mr. Pressler, United States)

Many of these goals are also the focus of attention of the Partnership for Development and Democracy (PDD), which brings the Central American Governments together with three Latin American neighbours, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) nations, and various international organizations into a single forum dedicated to supporting the process of democratization and development in the region. The PDD, which completed a very successful meeting on 15-16 October in San Salvador, meets next in Tokyo in March. We are pleased by the progress made in this forum to date and invite the international community's attention and support to this important work.

The nations of Central America are rapidly approaching a day when the entire region will be at peace, thanks in large part to the commitment and dedication of the United Nations and the parties. It has been a long and arduous task, but the end result serves as a testament to the important role of the United Nations and as a tribute to the men and women who never lost sight of their goal - peace.

Mr. RICHARDSON (United Kingdom): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Community and its member States.

Five years after the Esquipulas Agreements, the Central American peace process appears to have made remarkable progress. This process, which has had the full support of the European Community and its member States and the close attention of the General Assembly for many years, has made possible further substantial progress in the past year towards the establishment of peace and security in the region. With the formal ending of the armed conflict in El Salvador in sight, we look forward to a peaceful resolution of the one remaining armed conflict in the region. All the countries, in a region which

(Mr. Richardson, United Kingdom)

has suffered so much in the long years of conflict, can now work together for a new stable order in which reconciliation and reconstruction are the key elements.

At the centre of this transformation is the will of the peoples and Governments of the region to be rid of conflict and destruction. But the patient diplomacy of the United Nations has had a crucial part to play. The success of United Nations operations can be measured by the speed with which they are wound down: the withdrawal of the United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA) in January this year symbolized the successful completion of the main part of its mandate, which was to prevent cross-border movement of arms. From Secretaries-General, both past and present, to the humblest member of the United Nations operations which have underpinned the peace process, all deserve our praise for their unstinting efforts to create a new atmosphere of trust and cooperation.

The European Community and its member States warmly welcome the efforts made on all sides in the negotiating process, but also urge them to continue to show flexibility and openness in order to achieve lasting solutions to outstanding problems. The European Community and its member States believe that the results already achieved demonstrate that solutions for the region's conflicts must come from within Central America. The Chapultepec Agreement, signed by the Government of El Salvador and the FMLN on 16 January this year, was a turning-point both for El Salvador and for the region. The European Community and its member States warmly welcomed the agreement and the subsequent cease-fire as the culmination of much patient negotiation and confidence building. The former Secretary-General, his four friends -

(Mr. Richardson, United Kingdom)

Colombia, Mexico, Spain and Venezuela - his Special Representative, and the United States, all played a crucial role in this process. Implementation of the Agreement has not been without its difficulties. Twelve years of conflict and mistrust could not be forgotten overnight. But the European Community and its member States are encouraged by the maintenance of the cease-fire, by the progress made and the flexibility shown by both sides. They urge both sides to honour their recent agreement to meet the revised final deadline of 15 December for the formal ending of the armed conflict.

The European Community and its member States have supported both the implementation of the peace process and reconstruction in El Salvador in a number of practical ways, including financial support for the land bank created to redistribute land to former combatants on both sides. In that regard, they trust that the Secretary-General's recent proposals, which have been accepted by the parties, will enable the difficulties to be overcome.

The United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL) is playing a key role in supporting the peace process in El Salvador. The human rights monitoring mission set up in advance of the cease-fire helped to create a climate in which the final stages of negotiations could proceed more smoothly, and has since ensured that allegations of human rights abuses could be examined impartially and dispassionately. The European Community and its member States have continued to monitor human rights observance in El Salvador and have expressed concern to both sides about continuing cases of abuse. They are confident, however, that a completed implementation of the peace agreement will finally provide the conditions for full observance of human rights in the country.

(Mr. Richardson, United Kingdom)

The European Community and its member States supported the expansion of ONUSAL in the wake of the peace agreement to provide political and military back-up for its implementation. They look forward to further progress towards the creation of conditions of normality in El Salvador. Such conditions would allow the mandate of ONUSAL to be redesigned and its presence to be scaled down.

The European Community and its member States look forward to the successful outcome of the negotiations between the Government of Guatemala and the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union (URNG), including on the protection of human rights. They reaffirm their support for the agreements of Mexico of 26 April 1991 and Queretaro of 25 July 1991 and recognize the important contribution of the Guatemalan National Reconciliation Commission, headed by the Conciliator, in facilitating these negotiations. They renew their call on both sides to intensify their efforts to reach a lasting peace.

(Mr. Richardson, United Kingdom)

They encourage the Government of Guatemala to give continuing high priority to the implementation of measures and policies designed to strengthen democratic institutions and achieve full observance of human rights, to which the European Community and its member States will continue to pay close attention. They congratulate Rigoberta Menchu on being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize and hope this award will enhance efforts to achieve reconciliation between all sectors in Guatemala.

The European Community and its member States hope that conditions can soon be created to allow the safe return of Guatemalan refugees. They welcome the agreement, signed on 8 October between the Government of Guatemala and the Permanent Commissions of Guatemalan Refugees in Mexico, which provides for the voluntary return of refugees in conditions of security with United Nations verification.

In respect of Nicaragua, the European Community and its member States urge that all political and social forces remain committed to the spirit of national reconciliation evinced in the Conciliation Agreements of October 1990 on fostering democracy and the restoration of a viable economy. They confirm their readiness to support economic and social development in Nicaragua.

At the same time as internal conflicts are being resolved, the European Community and its member States have been encouraged by progress made towards settling much older disputes between countries of the region. A year ago they were already welcoming the recognition of the State of Belize by the Government of Guatemala; they look forward to a final resolution of the remaining territorial issues. More recently, they have welcomed the settlement of the border dispute between El Salvador and Honduras, following the Judgment by the International Court of Justice on 11 September. The

(Mr. Richardson, United Kingdom)

readiness of the two Governments to accept the Court's decision augurs well for the development of regional integration.

Human rights abuses have for a long time been a problem in Central America. At the eighth San José Conference of European Community and Central American Foreign Ministers, held in Lisbon in February, it was agreed to set up a series of programmes aimed at changing attitudes in this area. An emphasis is placed on creating a new atmosphere of understanding and tolerance which will put an end to such abuses.

The European Community and its member States are much encouraged by the return of many refugees and displaced persons to their homes, following the settlement of conflicts in the region. They recognize that a continued effort is needed to reintegrate such people into their communities. Mainly in the framework of the International Conference on Central American Refugees (CIREFCA), the European Community has financed more than half of the concerted plan of action for Central American refugees, returnees and displaced persons. They are also supporting Central America in implementation of the health priority plan for the region.

Economic adjustment and stabilization policies, required as a means to reconstruction in the region, inevitably have social side-effects. The European Community and its member States intend to continue to use the means at their disposal to implement programmes aimed at alleviating such side-effects. They note in this connection that the level of assistance they have provided to the region has greatly increased over recent years. The European Community is currently the major aid donor in this field.*

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* Mr. Phoofolo (Lesotho), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Richardson, United Kingdom)

The European Community and its member States know from their own experience the value of working together in a regional context. They have therefore welcomed the moves towards integration in Central America, particularly the establishment of the Central American Parliament in October 1991, and the Tegucigalpa Agreement of December 1991, establishing the Central American Integration System. They note with interest the framework agreement between the countries of Central America and Mexico, signed in August 1992, designed to establish a free trade area that would give Central America access to the North American Free Trade Agreement. The European Community and its member States also welcome the implementation of a variety of regional cooperation and integration projects which receive financial and technical assistance from them.

The European Community and its member States reaffirm their readiness to cooperate with the Central American countries in their efforts to protect the environment and to restore and maintain the natural ecological balance.

The European Community and its member States also reiterate their concerns at the international drug problem and reaffirm their willingness to cooperate with the countries of Central America to overcome this scourge.

Through a political and economic dialogue maintained essentially through the San José process since 1984, the European Community and its member States have sought to promote and strengthen the Central American negotiation process throughout the region. They also welcome all the initiatives taken in favour of regional development in Central America, including the Partnership for Democracy and Development, in which the European Community and its member States participate.

(Mr. Richardson, United Kingdom)

Encouraged as they are by progress made on the political side, the European Community and its member States recognize the need for renewed commitment and sustained assistance. They accordingly reaffirm their intention to intensify the dialogue and to consolidate the San José process with the aim of fostering both political stability and economic development in the region.

Mr. OSVALD (Sweden): The year 1992 has been one of encouraging developments in Central America. Less than a decade ago, Central America was caught up in the super-Power rivalry. Conflicts with domestic causes were seen by some - in our view erroneously - in the light of global strategic interests. The fundamental needs of the Central American peoples for self-determination and social and economic justice were neglected.

Since the end of the cold war, new perspectives have opened up for Central America. Rule by the few is giving way to democracy. There is a growing recognition that respect for human rights must be one of the cornerstones of the new, modern societies emerging in the region.

However, and maybe most important, when vision is no longer clouded by the East-West conflict, the real problems of Central America can finally be constructively addressed. The efforts by the countries in the region to eliminate poverty, social and economic injustices, lack of democracy and outdated political structures, which have always been at the roots of the conflicts, must continue unabated.

Sweden applauds the positive initiatives for regional cooperation in Central America, all of them important for regional stability, democracy and social justice. Expanded regional cooperation will optimize the use of material and human resources within the region and strengthen its position in

(Mr. Osvald, Sweden)

international cooperation. Demilitarization will facilitate social and economic investments in order to secure sustainable development. Economic reform programmes will help provide a basis for growth and social welfare. Increased awareness in the field of environmental protection will benefit present and future generations. Programmes for repatriation of refugees promote stability and human dignity.

The establishment of diplomatic relations between Guatemala and Belize is indeed a contribution not only to normalization but possibly also to an enhanced regional cooperation.

The acceptance by El Salvador and Honduras of the recent settlement in the International Court of Justice of the border dispute between the two countries is another example of a positive development in the region.

(Mr. Osvald, Sweden)

We wholeheartedly support the United Nations activities in Central America. The involvement of the international community is of crucial importance for the region.

Sweden has had programmes for development cooperation with the countries in Central America for more than 10 years. Those programmes now amount to approximately $115 million per year. They include bilateral agreements, and support for commitments made by the United Nations, regional institutions and non-governmental organizations.

The unique mechanisms implemented through the International Conference on Central American Refugees (CIREFCA) concept is one good example of the benefits and payoffs of internationally supported regional cooperation involving a wide range of different actors. Sweden supports the recently agreed extension of the mandate of CIREFCA up to April 1994, and emphasizes that decisive steps and measures have to be taken in order to accomplish the gradual shift of responsibilities from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to the United Nations Development Programme.

By linking our programmes to the national and regional development policies of the Central American countries, Sweden hopes to contribute to the consolidation of peace and democracy there, to the strengthening of those countries' economies and to sustainable development. We see a potential for supporting the efforts of the countries in Central America to implement the commitments entered into at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio as well as within the framework of conventions on human rights.

(Mr. Osvald, Sweden)

The signing in Mexico on 16 January 1992 of the El Salvador Peace Agreement between the Government of El Salvador and the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN) filled us with profound satisfaction. From the outset Sweden has closely followed the peace process in El Salvador. We have supported it both politically and financially.

Owing to the constructive efforts of the parties and the Secretary-General, as well as of Colombia, Mexico, Spain and Venezuela, the so-called Friends of the Secretary-General, and, lately, the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL), the progress in the peace process has been impressive and encouraging.

The El Salvador Peace Agreement is a complex package. The parties have committed themselves, within their respective spheres of responsibility, to taking balanced, reciprocal steps aimed at laying the foundation for national reconciliation and creating a new, just and democratic society. Both the Government of El Salvador and the FMLN must do what it is incumbent on them to do in order to implement the Agreement in its entirety.

Sweden welcomes the fact that the parties, through the active involvement of the United Nations, reached an agreement earlier this autumn regarding the ongoing stages of the peace process. We salute the constructive spirit and the genuine cooperation which both sides have shown in overcoming the difficulties.

This phase of the peace process is planned to culminate with the formal end of the armed conflict on 15 December. Sweden will send a special delegation to El Salvador to participate in the official celebration of this important event.

(Mr. Osvald, Sweden)

The United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador is an encouraging example of a new kind of peace-keeping operation in which traditional military tasks form an integrated whole with measures of post-conflict peace-building. ONUSAL has played a crucial role in overseeing the implementation of the Peace Agreement in, for example, the fields of demobilization, human-rights monitoring and the training of a civilian police force. Sweden participates in ONUSAL by providing both military observers and civilian police.

Sweden will continue to follow developments in El Salvador. We hope that all countries with interests and influence in Central America will do their utmost to promote peace.

The long civil war in Guatemala must be brought to an end. The Swedish Government therefore regrets the stalemate in the negotiations between the Guatemalan Government and the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (UNRG). We urge the parties to pursue negotiations in good faith with a view to reaching a just and lasting settlement as soon as possible. The international community and the United Nations should be prepared to play an increased role in the peace process in Guatemala, if the parties so desire.

The situation concerning human rights in Guatemala remains a source of great concern. It is the responsibility of the Guatemalan Government to promote respect for human rights, prevent violent actions and take adequate measures against those who violate human rights. One of the most important elements for enhancing confidence in the peace process would be the rapid conclusion of an agreement on the human-rights issues.

(Mr. Osvald, Sweden)

Rigoberta Menchu, from Guatemala, a prominent activist for the rights of indigenous peoples and human rights, has been awarded this year's Nobel Peace Prize. This award is a recognition of all women and men who fight peacefully against repression and for human dignity. It is our conviction that the Peace Prize not only will draw the international community's attention to the situation in Guatemala, but will also be a positive contribution to progress along the road towards peace.

The recently concluded agreement between the Guatemalan Government and representatives of the refugees concerning the return of these refugees to their homeland was a significant development. The parties and the United Nations contributed constructively to the reaching of this agreement, within the framework of CIREFCA. The Swedish Government is prepared to contribute to the implementation of the agreement and expects all parties involved to adhere to its spirit and its letter.

The Swedish Government is encouraged by the fact that the people and Government of Nicaragua have chosen to walk the path of national reconciliation. Democracy is growing stronger and human rights are being increasingly respected.

It is of fundamental importance for Nicaragua's future that the economic recovery should be able to continue. The success of the Government's programme for economic stabilization is crucial in this regard. This was again manifested at the donor meeting held in Managua last week.

Sweden has decided to make some reallocations within its programme of development cooperation with Nicaragua in order to adapt its assistance, in a flexible manner, to the difficult economic situation in the country. We urge other countries to assist Nicaragua so that further disruptions of the fragile

(Mr. Osvald, Sweden)

Nicaraguan economy can be avoided. We note the decision by the United States, just mentioned by the United States representative, to release $54 million in economic support funds for Nicaragua.

On balance, we have reason to be hopeful concerning the situation in Central America. The conflicts have, however, not all been settled, and the process of modernizing Central America has only just begun. The joint efforts by the countries of the region to promote peace, justice, development and democracy are solid manifestations of the new climate of cooperation and reconciliation in Central America. It is the duty - but it is also in the interest - of the rest of the international community to support this significant endeavour.

Mr. HATANO (Japan): The peace process in El Salvador has particular significance for the United Nations. The coordination of its operations in El Salvador with the initiatives of like-minded countries has demonstrated new ways in which peace-keeping and peacemaking may be effectively combined, and has provided a model for future endeavours.

The Peace Agreement reached in January is the culmination of complex United Nations and regional efforts and is a powerful expression of political will on the part of the parties concerned. The people of El Salvador are now about to show the international community if the concept of peace-building is in fact viable. Permit me to enumerate the reasons why this effort in El Salvador deserves the particular attention of the international community.

(Mr. Hatano, Japan)

First, the Security Council recently sent a message to the parties in El Salvador, urging them to respect and implement their commitments under the Peace Agreement and to respond positively to the Secretary-General's efforts to resolve the outstanding questions. Japan, as a member of the Council, is confident that this message has the backing of the entire United Nations membership. Japan trusts that the parties will recognize the essential need to comply with a definite timetable and will overcome the remaining difficulties in a peaceful manner. The most recent developments in El Salvador give us reason for optimism.

Secondly, it is important that the international community should be aware of the complex nature of the peace-building efforts required to crystallize the peace in El Salvador. In this context, and recognizing the needs of the people of El Salvador as they strive to overcome their economic and social problems, Japan is at present extending various kinds of medium-term and long-term cooperation, including yen loans, general grant aid and technical cooperation, in addition to the emergency assistance package which was provided in response to immediate needs. We hope that this assistance will in turn help to promote the peace process and ensure that it is irreversible.

Thirdly, one of the goals of United Nations activities in El Salvador is the strengthening of regional stability. In this connection I express my appreciation to El Salvador and Honduras for their efforts to implement the Judgment of the International Court of Justice dated 11 September 1992. Their joint endeavours should be encouraged, so as to ensure that the implementation of the Judgment will not destabilize the peace process in El Salvador in any way.

(Mr. Hatano, Japan)

As we set out on the path towards actual peace-building, not only in El Salvador but throughout Central America, it is useful to underline two points.

First, as progress has been made in the peace process, the nature of the refugee problem has changed. It is now important to encourage the refugees and displaced persons to return to their homes, safely and with dignity, and to address conditions that may pose obstacles to that process. Recognizing that the rehabilitation of infrastructures in their home country is vitally important, Japan has extended the necessary cooperation for that purpose. The strengthened role of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) may also be relevant to the work of the International Conference on Central American Refugees (CIREFCA).

Secondly, the active involvement of the region's countries in the peace process should be commended. The forward-looking approach taken at the Managua Summit in June encourages us to believe that additional moves towards peace-building will be undertaken. Intraregional cooperation should be promoted in various contexts, which in turn will surely strengthen peace and stability in El Salvador and beyond. The Partnership for Democracy and Development in Central America (PDD), a formula of support for such efforts by the Central American countries, convened its third plenary meeting in October in the city of San Salvador. The success of the meeting was symbolic of the progress that has been made in the peace process throughout the region. Japan continues to support the initiatives taken by the nations of Central America.

For all the reasons I have just outlined, efforts by the various agencies of the United Nations are of crucial importance. It is essential that both the General Assembly and the Security Council should follow such activities

(Mr. Hatano, Japan)

very carefully, bearing in mind the concept of peace-building in its most innovative sense. It is equally necessary that we should strengthen our support for the Secretary-General, who has played an important role in restoring peace and stability to Central America. We hope that this experience will promote further United Nations efforts to combine peace-keeping, peacemaking and peace-building missions in other parts of the world. Japan is among the many countries that eagerly anticipate this auspicious expansion of the United Nations role for world peace.

Mr. LOZINSKIY (Russian Federation)(interpretation from Russian): Since the last session of the General Assembly there have been significant changes in Central America in the direction of eliminating hotbeds of instability and international tension. It is being confirmed in practice that the problems facing Central America can and must be resolved solely by peaceful means, at the negotiating table.

The Russian Federation, as a permanent member of the Security Council, approaches with a deep sense of responsibility the task of maintaining international peace and security in Central America and is prepared to continue interacting constructively with the States of that region, both bilaterally and multilaterally, in order to help bring about a successful solution of their problems and promote their efforts to bring about full normalization of the situation in that region. We regard the recent granting to our country of the status of Permanent Observer in the Organization of American States (OAS) as recognition of Russia's potential in this respect.

The Russian Federation welcomes the successful development of the process of peaceful settlement in El Salvador. Thanks to the purposeful efforts of the United Nations and its Secretary-General and also thanks to the active

(Mr. Lozinskiy, Russian Federation)

assistance of all States interested in a settlement, it has been possible to bring the peace process in that country to a logical conclusion, that is national reconciliation, the official ceremony for which will take place on 15 December 1992.

Russia, which has always striven to make its contribution to a political settlement of the Salvadorian conflict, intends to continue giving all necessary support to the activities of the Secretary-General and of his representatives and the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL). We are prepared to interact constructively with all States concerned, the Government of El Salvador and the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN). We see our task as that of encouraging the parties in El Salvador in every possible way to comply conscientiously with their obligations for a settlement; to ensure the irreversibility of the democratic changes taking place and to do so on the basis of respect for human rights; and to promote a rebirth of the country's economy.

(Mr. Lozinskiy, Russian Federation)

We hope that the overall improvement in the situation in Central America will have a favourable effect on the situation in Guatemala as well. We support the efforts of the Government of Guatemala and the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca to achieve national reconciliation, and we commend the role being played by the Serrano administration in bringing about the conditions needed to reach that goal. We hope that the positive results achieved with United Nations assistance on political settlements first in Nicaragua and now in El Salvador will prompt the Guatemalans too to search more actively for solutions opening the way to a peace process.

Russia welcomes the active role played by Latin American States in the efforts to achieve disarmament and their initiatives in the areas of security and the verification, monitoring and limitation of arms and armed forces.

Russia, for its part, is ready to study the possibility of sharing with Latin American countries its own experience in the field of disarmament, for instance through the Security Commission established under the Esquipulas II agreement. We hope that our experience in such areas as the limitation of military activities, the establishment of a regime of transparency in military matters, the adoption of confidence-building measures and the achievement of agreements on reductions in armed forces and armaments can be very useful, giving due regard, of course, to specific local problems in the discussion of a collective security system in negotiations among the States of the region.

We believe that the creation of such a system and the stimulation of integration processes, primarily in the economic sphere, will promote faster progress in Central America towards the practical establishment of a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development.

(Mr. Lozinskiy, Russian Federation)

We feel that good foundations have recently been laid for lasting peace and stability in Central America and the creation of favourable conditions for solving pressing social and economic problems. It is the duty of the United Nations to do all it can for a dynamic and irreversible process of complete and final settlement of the region's problems.

Mr. YAÑEZ-BARNUEVO (Spain) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation, naturally, fully supports the statement made by the representative of the United Kingdom on behalf of the 12 States members of the European Community.

During the past twelve months the situation in Central America has, in general, improved, and Spain welcomes this. As the very title of the agenda item before us indicates, threats to international peace and security are becoming a thing of the past, and progress towards fashioning Central America into a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development is being consolidated.

But our satisfaction at past developments should not lead us to underestimate the problems of the future. In our view, the definitive elimination of the major obstacles to a complete reign of peace, freedom, democracy and development requires an overall frame of reference enabling the international community to direct its support towards the efforts of the Central American countries to achieve integration and perfect their democracies.

We believe that Central America should receive preferential attention from the international community in all areas relating to assistance for

(Mr. Yáñez-Barnuevo, Spain)

economic and social reconstruction in order to lay a stable foundation on which the peoples and the Governments of Central America can build a future of lasting peace and stability.

Central America need not fear that the international community will forget it once the region has overcome the threats to international peace and security. That would be unfair to the Central Americans and inconsistent on the part of the international community, which, through the Secretary-General, has recognized the vital importance of measures for post-conflict peacemaking and peace-building.

With respect to the situation in El Salvador, Spain, which is proud to join Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela in the group of "Friends of the Secretary-General", welcomes the prospect that on 15 December the Salvadorian people will formally mark the end of the armed confrontation which has, over the past 12 years, taken so many lives and caused so much suffering in that Central American country. That will be a truly historic date for El Salvador and for all of us: we shall have the pleasure of once again congratulating the people of El Salvador, its Government, its President, the leadership of the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN) and all the other political and social forces on having made peace possible.

Aware of the difficulties that could arise during this new stage in the peace process, Spain reiterates its firm resolve and its commitment to continue to support the work of the Secretary-General until the full and complete implementation of the Peace Agreement for El Salvador signed on 16 January 1992 at Chapultepec.

(Mr. Yáñez-Barnuevo, Spain)

With respect to the situation in Guatemala, my Government shares the Secretary-General's concern, expressed in his recent report to the General Assembly, at the unsatisfactory course of the negotiating process in that country. We attach great importance to the continuation of talks between the Government of Guatemala and the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca, held under the auspices of the National Reconciliation Commission of Guatemala, at which the representative of the Secretary-General was present.

In the current circumstances, we urge both parties to promote the negotiating process and to move without delay to adopt compromise solutions on all the issues set forth in the Mexico City Agreement, in particular to sign a comprehensive agreement on human rights, in order to achieve, with the support of the United Nations and the international community, national reconciliation and a firm and lasting peace with full respect for the human rights of all Guatemalans.

I want also to address the situation in Nicaragua and to affirm that my Government has not forgotten the problems confronting that country following the attainment of peace.

(Mr. Yáñez-Barnuevo, Spain)

We call for moderation and a sense of responsibility on the part of all the political and social forces in Nicaragua, and we support the efforts of the Government of Nicaragua to consolidate peace. With other donor countries and the international community, we stand ready to assist in that country's economic and social development, convinced as we are that without economic progress and social justice it is impossible to establish the conditions necessary for stability and peace.

We cannot fail to mention one of the most striking events to have occurred in the region this year, the settlement of the border dispute between El Salvador and Honduras following the Judgment of the International Court of Justice, accepted by both parties. We regard that as a very important step towards the achievement of stability in the region, and we commend the attitude of both Governments and peoples, who have set a true example for the world.

At a time when flashpoints of violence are proliferating and many regional conflicts in various parts of the world are worsening, Central America may well be proud of presenting one of the clearest examples of the successful settlement of conflicts - diverse conflicts - thanks to the firm determination of its Governments and the close coordination of United Nations peace-keeping and peacemaking activities, carried out with praiseworthy perseverance and skill by the Secretary-General - both the former Secretary-General, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, and the current Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros-Ghali - his staff and his Special Representative.

I wish to place on record our satisfaction at the success of the United Nations Observer Group for Central America (ONUCA), which in January 1992

(Mr. Yáñez-Barnuevo, Spain)

enabled it to conclude its mandate, a rare event in the history of United Nations peace-keeping operations.

For its part, the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL) is carrying out a vital task in El Salvador, without which it would have been impossible to advance the peace process. We wish to pay tribute here to all the personnel - civilian, military and police - that are doing extraordinary work in this connection.

Allow me to recall that the 21 Heads of State and Government who met in Madrid on 23 and 24 July this year, on the occasion of the second Ibero-American Summit, stated:

> "We trust that the policy of dialogue, cooperation and reconciliation will continue throughout Central America, so that it will cease to be a zone of conflict and become a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development, with strict respect for human rights". (A/47/356, annex, para. 8)

The dignitaries who met in Madrid also appealed to the international community to lend its firm support to the achievement of these goals and pointed out that the maintenance of peace in the region must not be hampered by lack of economic and financial support.

Therefore, I should like to reiterate here the firm commitment of the Spanish Government to continue to cooperate to the utmost in the development of Central America. Spain believes that we must not now turn our backs on a region whose peoples and Governments have firmly pledged to consolidate peace and stability or deny them the necessary means to assure them a future of progress and peaceful coexistence.

Mr. MONTAÑO (Mexico)(interpretation from Spanish): I am pleased to speak today on behalf of the Group of Three - the Governments of Colombia, Venezuela and Mexico - on an issue of vital importance to our region.

During the past 12 months there has been considerable progress in Central America towards the consolidation of a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development, which has been the constant and legitimate hope of its people. Central Americans have demonstrated an unshakeable willingness to overcome decades of violence, instability and deprivation. In Central America peace has become an opportunity and a challenge to live in tolerance and harmony within a framework of prosperity. The help of the community of nations is needed so that what is today a hope can become a daily reality in this fraternal region.

The signing of the Chapultepec Agreements in Mexico on 16 January this year was a triumph for the people of El Salvador, putting an end to the bloody conflict that had deprived them for more than a decade of the opportunity to live in well-being and justice. The negotiation of the peace Agreements required a considerable effort by the parties involved in the conflict to overcome profound mutual antagonism and distrust. However, the will of the Salvadorian people to abandon uncertainty and violence was clearly the primary motivating factor behind the progress of the negotiations. The Government of El Salvador and the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN) responded calmly to the people's demand and are now preparing to live in tolerance within a framework of democracy and mutual respect.

The people of El Salvador deserve this long-awaited peace. The implementation of the Agreements has brought with it new trials and new challenges. It is clear, however, that the process is irreversible; peace has been achieved. Now, the challenge is to use the Agreements as a foundation

(Mr. Montaño, Mexico)

for building a society that is productive, free and fair and that respects human dignity. The destructive efforts of the past must now be transformed into a creative endeavour for reconstruction. The Agreements are an initial victory towards progress. The war now is against poverty and marginalization, intolerance and dogmatism, violence and injustice.

The triumph of the people of El Salvador is also a triumph for the region and for the world.

The conflict in El Salvador generated instability and uncertainty, which spread throughout the region, preventing realization of the collective commitment to well-being and justice. From 15 December the countries of the region will have a new opportunity to pool their capabilities and talent to foster economic and social progress. The region's industry, trade and culture can now be promoted actively to benefit all of Central America. The potential for cooperation with other countries or groups of countries is also multiplying, and additional opportunities for progress are emerging.

The triumph of peace in El Salvador also has a universal dimension. At a time when regional conflicts seem to be multiplying endlessly, the negotiation of peace in El Salvador, as the Secretary-General correctly points out in his report, can serve as an inspiration for the solution of other conflicts, and to that end these negotiations should be given careful consideration.

It should be pointed out that this peace results first and foremost from the will of the people of El Salvador, who spoke out against weapons and in favour of reason. Their voice was heard during the negotiations and made the parties seek agreements that have put an end to the violence.

Chapultepec, Mexico, also saw the culmination of regional diplomatic efforts, which were decisively pushed forward by the leaders of the Central

(Mr. Montaño, Mexico)

American region. That framework provided support for the principles of non-intervention, self-determination, the peaceful settlement of disputes and cooperation for peace and development. The goal of ensuring the sovereign integrity and political independence of the nations of the region was always kept in sight. This was essential for the full development of the Agreements, which until a few months ago seemed to belong more to the realm of fantasy than to political reality.

(Mr. Montaño, Mexico)

The United Nations has also played a vital role, in keeping with its mandate and as an embodiment of the purposes and objectives set forth in its Charter. Today we wish to pay a just tribute to Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, whose authority and personal efforts gave impetus to the negotiation process and helped to overcome obstacles that appeared to be insurmountable. The current Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, has adhered faithfully to the goals of international harmony. In the negotiations in the course of the past few months, which were essential to the consolidation of the process, Mr. Boutros-Ghali has acted with resolve, understanding and authority, and has proved to be a true friend of the region and an advocate of peace.

The task of the United Nations is continuing, with the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL) discharging its mandate. We would like to thank the members of ONUSAL for their impartial contribution to the effort of Salvadoran society to consolidate peace, reconciliation, development and justice. Mexico is proud of the fact that its initial participation in a peace-keeping operation was, precisely, within ONUSAL, in strict conformity with our unwavering commitment to achieve peace in the region.

Along with the presidents of Colombia, Spain, Venezuela and Mexico, we have respectfully participated in the building of peace in El Salvador. The Group of Friends of the Secretary-General, together with the United States Government, established an effective mechanism for cooperation in the negotiation process. We now maintain our firm willingness to continue this assistance, within a framework of respect, in the consolidation of peace and prosperity for the Salvadoran people.

(Mr. Montaño, Mexico)

On behalf of the Group of Three, I should also like to pay a heartfelt tribute to the courage and strength with which President Alfredo Cristiani and the command of the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN) have assumed their responsibilities in this difficult undertaking.

While considerable progress has been made towards firm and lasting peace in Central America, the region now needs a renewed incentive to consolidate its objectives of economic and social development. The international community cannot and must not look away now and believe that the stability that has been achieved means that there are no problems in the region. We must not forget that among the causes of the region's problems were shortages and economic underdevelopment, which will continue to jeopardize lasting peace as long as these problems remain unresolved.

Central America can now provide a suitable scenario for progress in the post-conflict consolidation of peace. As the Secretary-General correctly points out in his "Agenda for Peace", once the conditions for peace have been restored, the only way to establish a lasting foundation for peace is through

> "sustained, cooperative work to deal with underlying economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems". (A/47/277, para. 57)

The Group of Three has put forward schemes for regional cooperation with a view to fostering Central American development. We have promoted the consolidation of flexible and expedient programmes of cooperation in such diverse areas as communications, transportation and energy. At the same time, we are fostering regional development, in the belief that a more prosperous Central America will make a significant contribution to the well-being of the entire region as a whole.

(Mr. Montaño, Mexico)

In the same spirit, my Government last August signed a framework agreement for economic cooperation with Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, which lays the foundations for a future free trade agreement between Mexico and these countries. The goals of the framework agreement include the adoption of measures to promote sustained development of a greater export supply from the Central American nations.

Today I can reaffirm the will of the Group of Three to continue to cooperate with the fraternal countries of Central America for the benefit of the entire region.

As the Secretary-General points out in his report to the General Assembly on this subject, the parties involved in the conflict in Guatemala have honoured the commitment made in 1991 in Mexico not to abandon the negotiating process, in spite of their pronounced differences. However, it is clear that the process must be promoted and efforts revitalized so that the goal of a stable and lasting peace can also soon be reached in Guatemala. The Group of Three - Colombia, Venezuela and Mexico - will continue to provide its unfailing support to the parties in order to help them achieve this noble and urgent goal.

Central America is now at a watershed in its history. It has put behind it decades of violence and instability and is preparing to live in peace and well-being. Central Americans have joined the community of nations in stating their unfailing willingness to put an end to the conflicts that divided them. The task at hand now is to ensure that peace will be supported by economic and social development. In this undertaking, Central Americans must have the resolute support of the community of nations, and in particular the support of those best equipped to provide it.

The PRESIDENT: We have now heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

I should like to inform members that action on draft resolution A/47/L.34 will be taken at a later date, to be announced in the Journal.

AGENDA ITEM 48

COMMEMORATION OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN 1995

(a) REPORT OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS (A/47/48)

(b) DRAFT DECISION (A/47/48, Sect. IV)

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the Rapporteur of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, who will introduce the report of the Committee (A/47/48).

Ms. MATHURIN MAIR (Jamaica), Rapporteur of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations: I have the honour to present the report of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations (A/47/48) to be commemorated in 1995.

Member States will recall that it was at the 76th plenary meeting of its forty-sixth session, in December 1991, that the General Assembly decided, on the recomendation of the General Committee, to include this item in the agenda of its forty-sixth session. Subsequently, at the 84th plenary meeting, the General Assembly adopted decision 46/472, by which it decided to establish a preparatory committee for the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, a committee consisting of the members of the General Committee and open to the participation of all Member States, and to entrust the preparatory committee with the task of considering and recommending to the General Assembly at this forty-seventh session proposals for suitable activities in connection with the observance of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

(Ms. Mathurin Mair, Rapporteur, Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations)

The first meeting of the Preparatory Committee took place on 22 October 1992. It elected its officers and considered statements by representatives of Member States and then began the organization of its work. It had before it a document regarding the commmemoration of previous anniversaries.

Mr. Richard Butler of Australia was elected by acclamation Chairman of the Bureau. The other officers, also elected by acclamation, were: Mr. Juan Somavia of Chile, Mr. Razali Ismail of Malaysia, Mr. Salim Bin Mohammed Al-Khussaiby of Oman and Mr. Zbiogniew Wlosowicz of Poland as Vice-Chairmen, and myself as Rapporteur.

On that occasion the Secretary-General emphasized the need for reform of the Organization in connection with the fiftieth anniversary and highlighted the vital role of the public, the media, the specialized agencies and the non-governmental organizations in the commemoration. Subsequent speeches by representatives supported the recommendations of the Secretary-General and reflected the great importance that Member States attached to the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary.

At the second meeting of the Preparatory Committee, which took place on 30 November, the remaining officers of the Bureau were elected. At that meeting the Committee also considered programmes, activities and other matters in connection with the fiftieth anniversary and the organization of its programme of work.

The Committee had before it a note by the Secretariat on the observance of the fiftieth anniversary which summarized the proceedings of the first

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meeting, outlined actions taken in respect of the fiftieth anniversary and raised various matters relating to the commemoration.

The remaining officers of the Bureau who were elected on that occasion were: Mr. Legwaila Joseph Legwaila of Botswana, Mr. Mohamedou Ould Mohamed Mahmoud of Mauritania and Mr. Wilhelm Breitenstein of Finland, as Vice-Chairmen.

In considering various programmes and activities in connection with the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary, the Preparatory Committee agreed that, as well as the recommendations included in the note by the Secretariat, additional recommendations would be examined at future meetings.

Statements were made by representatives of the following Member States: Austria, Niger, the Republic of Korea, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Finland, Cyprus, Sierra Leone, Oman, Venezuela, Tunisia, Slovenia, Costa Rica, Egypt, India, Mauritania, Jordan, Togo, Algeria and France.

At the conclusion of the Committee's substantive discussion, the Chairman noted the clear emphasis that had been placed on the importance of the Committee's work in the process of reshaping the United Nations. Moreover, the various programmes and activities proposed would enable the Committee to select those which were most likely to contribute to achieving the objectives of the anniversary. It was felt that the establishment of national committees would further assist in meeting those objectives. The Chairman concluded by recommending that the Committee take note of the report by the Secretariat, and it was so decided.

In order to enable the Preparatory Committee to meet the requirements of its programme of work for 1993, the Chairman, in consultation with the

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Secretariat, introduced a draft decision, which is contained in paragraph 14 of the report (A/47/48), for consideration by the Committee. That draft decision was subsequently adopted by the Committee without a vote.

The Chairman stated that should the General Assembly adopt the draft decision, it was anticipated that 12 meetings of the Preparatory Committee would be scheduled in New York during 1993. The scheduling of those meetings would be arranged in consultation with the Office of Conference Services to ensure that the related requirements could be absorbed from existing conference-servicing capacity. Therefore, it was not anticipated that the adoption of the draft decision would have programme budget implications.

The Chairman further stated that following action on the report of the Preparatory Committee by the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session he would, in consultation with the Bureau, develop and circulate a draft programme of work of the Committee for 1993.

In conclusion, the Preparatory Committee wishes to recommend to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft decision, as considered by the Preparatory Committee at its second meeting, which took place on 30 November 1992:

"The General Assembly,

"Taking note of the work of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary in 1992,

"Decides that the Preparatory Committee should continue its work and report thereon to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session."

That is the recommendation now before the General Assembly for its decision.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations.

Mr. BUTLER (Australia) (Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations): May I begin by expressing on behalf of the Preparatory Committee our gratitude to the Rapporteur, the Permanent Representative of Jamaica, for the report she has just presented to the Assembly.

I should also like to express my gratitude to my colleagues fellow members of the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee for the work they have done and the support they have extended to the Committee. I should note, too, the profound interest that has already been shown by the whole membership of the United Nations in these opening stages of the work of the Preparatory Committee.

The comprehensiveness and clarity of our Rapporteur's presentation of the report makes it unnecessary for me to speak at great length. I would note, however, that the presentation of the report today opens a new phase in the work of the Preparatory Committee. It positions us to start now on substantive preparations, work and planning for 1995.

In paragraph 13 of the report, it is indicated that following our action today I, together with the members of the Bureau, will develop immediately a draft programme of work for circulation to members of the Committee so that we shall be able to decide on the manner in which we shall proceed in our work in 1993.

(Mr. Butler, Chairman, Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations)

In that context I want to make clear that we in the Bureau are all agreed that our programme of work should in no way contradict or duplicate the very important work that is under way in a number of other committees and bodies of the Organization and that may also be seen to have an impact upon what will happen in 1995. Our purpose will be to shape our programme of work in a way that is complementary to the other significant work going on in many parts of the Organization with the focus upon what the Secretary-General has called the need for reform and change in the United Nations.

I would also underline the point that has been made by our Rapporteur with respect to the draft decision that is before the Assembly today. It is a simple decision which, when adopted, will enable us to make plans and will make it possible for the resources required for 12 meetings of the Preparatory Committee during 1993, to be set aside. I would call attention to the fact that, as indicated in paragraph 12 of the report, this draft decision has been studied by the Secretariat and we are advised that it would not have programme budget implications for 1993.

In these circumstances it remains for me now simply to reiterate my gratitude to colleagues who have helped produce this report, to commend it to the attention of the Assembly, and to ask that the draft decision it contains be adopted.

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision contained in section IV of the report of the Preparatory Committee (A/47/48).

I call on the Director of the Office of General Assembly Affairs.

Mr. SUKHODREV (Director, Office of General Assembly Affairs): I should like to inform members that should the General Assembly adopt the draft decision contained in section IV of the report of the Preparatory Committee (A/47/48), it is anticipated that 12 meetings of the Preparatory Committee would be scheduled in New York during 1993. It is understood that the scheduling of these meetings would be arranged in consultation with the Office of Conference Services to ensure that related requirements can be absorbed from existing conference-servicing capacity. On this basis, it is not anticipated that the adoption of the draft decision would have programme budget implications.

The PRESIDENT: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft decision contained in section IV of the report of the Preparatory Committee (A/47/48)?

The draft decision was adopted.

The PRESIDENT: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 48?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.